Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-11.   (Canceled)

12.   (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method comprising:

registering a first plurality of agents;

performing a first discovery operation including collecting and aggregating data from a first plurality of network devices with said first plurality of agents said data including two or more duplicate data entries;

coalescing said data in a software file comprising a discovery document, said coalescing comprising:

removing all but one of the duplicate data entries from said discovery document;

assigning a key to each network device based on a precedence file containing instructions for generating keys; and

appending said precedence file to said discovery document;

registering an additional agent; and

2

performing a second discovery operation with a second plurality of agents including said first plurality of agents and said additional agent.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said first plurality of agents include a plurality of discovery agents and a plurality of aggregator agents.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said registering the additional agent comprises storing an agent file describing attributes of the additional agent in an agent directory.

15.   (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the agent file comprises an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

16.   (Currently Amended) An article, including instructions residing on a computer-readable medium, the instructions causing a computer to:

receive discovery data collected from a network device by two or more discovery agents;

aggregate said discovery data;

3

generate a relationship file characterizing

relationships among network devices identified by the two or

more discovery agents;

coalesce the discovery data in a software file

comprising a discovery document, said discovery data including

two or more duplicate data entries; and

remove all but one of the duplicate data entries from

the discovery document.

17. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, further

comprising instructions that cause the computer machine to

register agents in an agent directory.

18. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 17, wherein

the instructions that cause the computer machine to receive

discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer

machine to call said two or more discovery agents from the agent

directory.

19. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 17, wherein

the instructions that cause the computer machine to aggregate

said data comprise instructions that cause the computer machine

4

to call two or more aggregator agents listed in an agent
directory.

20. (Original) The article of claim 17, wherein the agent
directory comprises a plurality of Extensible Markup Language
(XML) files.

21. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, wherein
the instructions that cause the <u>computer</u> ~~machine~~ to remove the
second duplicate data entry comprise instructions that cause the
<u>computer</u> ~~machine~~ to:

identify two or more agents responsible for generating
the two or more duplicate data entries, each agent having a
priority value;

compare the priority values of the two or more agents;

identify a first agent having a highest priority, said
first agent responsible for generating a first duplicate data
entry in the two or more duplicate data entries; and

remove all but the first duplicate data entry.

22. (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or
more agents are discovery agents.

5

23.   (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or more agents are aggregator agents.

24.   (Original) The article of claim 16, wherein the discovery document is an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

25.   (Currently Amended) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer ~~machine~~ to receive discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer ~~machine~~ to receive discovery data collected from two or more network devices by said two or more discovery agents.

26.   (Currently Amended) The article of claim 25, further comprising instructions that cause the computer ~~machine~~ to:

 store the discovery document in a discovery database; and

 generate a key for each discovered network device in the discovery document.

27.   (Previously Presented) An article, including instructions residing on a computer-readable medium, the instructions causing a computer to:

 register a first plurality of agents;

6

perform a first discovery operation including collect

and aggregate data from a first plurality of network devices

with said first plurality of agents said data including two or

more duplicate data entries;

coalesce said data in a software file comprising a

discovery document by:

removing all but one of the duplicate data

entries from said discovery document;

assigning a key to each network device based on a

precedence file containing instructions for generating keys; and

appending said precedence file to said discovery

document;

register an additional agent; and

perform a second discovery operation with a second

plurality of agents including said first plurality of agents and

said additional agent.

28.   (Original) The article of claim 27, wherein said first

plurality of agents include a plurality of discovery agents and

a plurality of aggregator agents.

29.   (Currently Amended) The article of claim 28, wherein

the instructions that cause the computer ~~machine~~ to register the

7

Attorney's Docket No.: 10559-380001 /P10186
Intel Corporation

additional agent comprise instructions that cause the <u>computer</u> ~~machine~~ to store an agent file describing attributes of the additional agent in an agent directory.

30.   (Original) The article of claim 29, wherein the agent file comprises an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

double spell

8